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NEWS.

DR. W. F. R. SURINGAR, Professor of Botany and Director of the Botanical Garden at Leiden since 1862, died on July 11 at the age of 66 years.

DR. CARL FRITSCH has been appointed director of the Botanical Museum of Vienna as the successor of the late Dr. Anton Kerner von Marilaun.

PROFESSOR DR. KARL GOEBEL, director of the Institute for Plant Physiology in Munich, is absent upon a journey to Australia and New Zealand.

PROFESSOR VOLNEY M. SPALDING, of the University of Michigan, has been granted a year's leave of absence. Dr. Julia W. Snow has been appointed instructor in botany in the same institution.

PROFESSOR L. M. UNDERWOOD of Columbia University returned on October 4 from his vacation trip in Europe, where he examined many herbaria for type material of Pteridophyta and Polyporei.

MR. C. F. BAKER of the Alabama Polytechnic Institute sailed from New York on November 5 for an extended collecting tour in South America, beginning at the northern border of Columbia, the region first visited by Jussieu and Bonpland. He will touch at Jamaica on the way.

THE IMPORTANT investigations by W. Belajeff upon the male prothallia of the water ferns (Hydropterideæ), published in Russian in 1890, have been made more available to botanists in general by their republication in German. See Bot. Zeit. 56¹: 141-194. *pl.* 2. 1898.

THE LLOYD series of photogravures of American Fungi has been increased by the issue last month of two numbers, one of *Polyporus umbellatus* Fr., and the other of *Strobilomyces strobilaceus* Scop. The latter, showing a common species known as black boletus, is from a remarkably perfect photograph.

PROFESSOR DR. PAUL KNUTH, of Kiel, started in October from Genoa upon a scientific tour of the world. He will be absent from eight to ten months, going through India to Java, where he will remain in Buitenzorg for some time, thence to China and Japan, and finally by way of Honolulu to this country.

MR. E. W. D. HOLWAY, who spent six weeks in Mexico during September and October, has brought back many new and interesting rusts and other 1898]

fungi. He collected in the region about the city of Mexico, somewhat at Mt. Orizaba and Vera Cruz, and northward, the last stop being made at San Luis Potosi and vicinity.

PROFESSOR W. F. GANONG, of Smith College, Northampton, Mass., wishes to obtain seeds of Cactaceæ collected in the field by botanists who can vouch for the accuracy of their determinations, particularly from localities outside of the United States. They are wanted for studies upon the embryology of the family in continuation of a work upon the subject now in press. Exchange will be made if desired.

THE NATIONAL HERBARIUM at Washington recently received the entire collection made by Dr. W. H. Forwood in western Wyoming in the years 1881-2. These plants form the basis for two reports published by the War Department, both of which are now quite difficult to obtain. Many of them, also, are reported upon in Mr. Frank Tweedy's *Flora of the Yellowstone*.

THE REPORT of Dr. D. Prain, the Director of the Botanical Survey of India, for the year 1897-8, is largely occupied by a continuation of Professor Woodrow's *Flora of Western India*. He records the botanical explorations which have been made during the year, of portions of Assam and Burma; in the latter of which great assistance was rendered by Lieut. E. Pottinger, R. A.—*Nature*.

A PRIZE OF 4000 MARKS is offered by the Economic Society of Mohrun-gen, near Königsberg, for the best work on the relations of electricity to living organisms. This work must discuss either fundamentally new phenomena in plant or animal electricity, or, from the point of view of physics, discuss the sources of organic electricity, or its significance for life in general or for certain functions.

UNDER THE AUSPICES of the New York Botanical Garden Mr. A. A. Heller will shortly leave for Porto Rico to make collections of the flora of our newly acquired territory. The flora of this island is very imperfectly represented in herbaria either in this country or in Europe. Arrangements will be made for preserving specimens both dried and in formalin. The expenses of the expedition will be borne by Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt.

IN HIS ADDRESS before the Section of Botany of the British Association, Professor F. O. Bower, President, discusses the homology of the members of the plant body at large with special reference to the question of homology involved in the alternation of generations in green plants. The paper is one that will be of large interest at the present time. It includes, also, some suggestive remarks upon the methods to be used in terminology. Professor Marshall Ward read a paper upon *Penicillium* as a wood destroying fungus, in which he showed that this plant, one of our commonest molds, undoubt-

edly plays an important part in the reduction of plant offal to the vegetable mold which makes up largely the soil of our forests. It was not determined in how far the fungus could initiate the destruction of the wood, if indeed it does not merely follow the attacks of other fungi and bacteria.

EDWARD TATNALL, one of our best local botanists, died somewhat suddenly at Wilmington, Del., on the 30th of May last in his eightieth year. Almost from childhood he had strong botanical tastes, and, as these increased, they were fostered and appreciated by his association and correspondence with such botanists as Darlington, James, Gray, Engelmann, and many others. He was the author of the "Catalogue of the plants of New Castle county, Delaware," which passed through two editions. Many herbaria in this and foreign lands have been enriched by his collections. He retained his active interest in botany to the last day of his life, and his death was much regretted by all who knew him.

CARD'S *Bush fruits*, one of the "Rural Science Series," is just off the press. It is very full in botanical matter, containing descriptions of all forms of *Rubus* and *Ribes*, wild and cultivated, in North America, with very many illustrations, following, in this respect, the precedent of Fuller's *Small fruit culturist*. It also has full lists of fungi which attack blackberries, raspberries, currants, gooseberries, etc. Bailey's *Evolution of our native fruits*, just published, contains a revision, with new names, of American blackberries and dewberries. Two of Professor Bailey's works, the *Forcing book* and *Plant breeding*, are now being translated into French. They are the first American horticultural books to be republished in France.

THE BOTANICAL expedition to the LaPlata and San Juan mountains of Colorado was in the field four weeks last summer, the time being unexpectedly shortened. During that time the three collectors, Professor F. S. Earle, C. F. Baker, and S. M. Tracy, secured about 25,000 specimens. Eighteen uniform sets (all sold in advance) will be distributed shortly, beside which there will be a number of partial sets (a few yet remaining unsold). It is believed that the series is more than usually valuable, both on account of the biological importance of the region, and from the care exercised to secure all available forms and variations. There are also a number of new species, and quite a number of rare ones, including *Ranunculus Macauleyi*, in flower and fruit, *Astragalus Wingatensis*, *Cerastium arvense Fuegianum*, *Fendlera rupicola*, and others. The sets will form the basis for a report upon the season's work, to be issued with the aid of Dr. E. L. Greene.

ACCORDING TO THE *Bulletin of Miscellaneous Information* of the Kew Gardens, the duties of the new department in the West Indies to be administered by the Imperial Commissioner of Agriculture, Dr. Morris, are to induce the people, as far as possible, to substitute other industries for sugar

raising, which is the almost universal occupation. Besides this, the department is to deal with all questions concerning economic plants and the botanical stations in all the islands. For the first year a grant of £4500 was made by Parliament with the expectation that the annual charges hereafter for the department will be £17,000. The establishment of this new department is an experiment in the hope of again placing these colonies in a self-supporting condition by diversifying the agriculture. It is intended, also, that the means of communication between the islands and the markets should be greatly improved. The government purposes establishing a line of steamers between the islands and New York, and also to secure, if possible, better communication between Jamaica and London. Fortnightly communication between the different islands is also to be established. The grant for these purposes, however, is to be separate from that intended for experimental and agricultural work.